



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
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****GUEST EDITORIAL****

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Education is the foundation for preserving our rights and freedoms

By State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

The importance of working together in our global society marked a milestone in October with the 60th anniversary celebration of the ratification of the United Nations charter.

Fifty-one nations working together to ensure human rights and peace declared their determination, "We the people of the United Nations...reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish...justice and respect for...international law...and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

The aim of the United Nations is fundamentally no different today than it was in that turbulent year of 1945. Working for peace and security, economic and social development, human rights, humanitarian efforts, and international law in every corner of the world, today's United Nations faces challenges and adversity. However, this international organization for peace and people has persevered.

In the world, in our nation, in our state, and in every community, we must remain clearly committed to the goals of the U.N. We must demonstrate in our beliefs and actions, in our work, and through our compassion, that our resolve will never waiver. We know and hold dear our faith that in spite of our differences and diverse backgrounds, we will unite together to face crisis and adversity.

But our nation cannot do it alone. In this 21st century, our collective future lies intertwined as global citizens. "Peace and security are dependent on mutual respect for the rights and freedoms of all." Eleanor Roosevelt declared this the United Nations' aim in 1945, and we know it to be true today.

The foundation of democracy and for preserving our rights and freedoms is education. "Everyone has the right to education," states the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Education

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“shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further...peace.”

In Wisconsin, we want our schools to instill and develop in our students a love of knowledge and learning, the ability to think critically, and to understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy. Through education, we can, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., learn the simple art of living together as brothers and sisters.

We must continue with all our might and full resolve to define our role as Americans in the world today as instruments of peace, dedicated to learning and living together as sisters and brothers.

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Elizabeth Burmaster is the elected state superintendent of public instruction.

NOTE: To download a high resolution photo of the state superintendent, visit the Department of Public Instruction “Media Contacts and Resources” webpage at < <http://dpi.wisconsin.gov/eis/vm-media.html> >.